

Draft Yolo Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan *Questions and Answers*



1. What is a habitat conservation plan?

A habitat conservation plan is a planning document that is required as part of an application for an incidental take permit. It describes the anticipated effects of the proposed taking, how those impacts will be minimized or mitigated, and how the habitat conservation plan will be funded.

Habitat conservation plans can apply to both listed and non-listed species, including those that are candidates or have been proposed for listing. Conserving species before they are in danger of extinction or are likely to become so can also provide early benefits and prevent the need for listing.

2. How can people submit their comments?

The 90-day comment period ends August 30, 2017. Any time before that deadline, people can submit their comments by U.S. Mail, fax, or at public meetings

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Public Meetings

Tuesday, June 27, 2017
1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.
Yolo County Board of Supervisors Chambers
625 Court Street, Room 206
Woodland, CA 95695

Thursday, June 29, 2017
6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m.
Davis Senior Center, 646 A Street
Davis, CA 95616

3. Who is the applicant?

Yolo Habitat Conservancy, Yolo County, and the cities of Davis, West Sacramento, Winters, and Woodland collectively prepared the draft Yolo Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan and applied for the 50-year incidental take permit.

4. How much land does the draft Yolo Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan cover and what counties will be affected?

The geographic scope of the draft plan encompasses a total of 654,723 acres. This includes:

- Solano County (on the south side of Putah Creek)—1,174 acres (all of which are private lands)
- Yolo county—653,549 acres (640,000 of which are private lands)

5. Will any private lands be affected by this habitat conservation plan?

Because habitat conservation plans are for non-federal entities, most are for activities on private lands. The applicants in the regional plans are applying for a permit on behalf of private landowners, so private land owners do not all have to apply to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (or the state) individually. Most of the projects proposed under the Yolo HCP are private development projects so the plan would affect most development related projects.

6. Why is the incidental take permit period 50 years?

The five-point policy for habitat conservation plans requires the applicant to specify the permit terms and because their activities are expected to continue for an undetermined amount of time, the applicants requested a 50-year permit with an option for renewal.

7. What species are covered by the habitat conservation plan?

There are 12 proposed covered species—some of which are federally-listed as threatened or endangered.

Federally Listed Species

1. [California tiger salamander](#), central distinct population segment (*Amystoma californiense*)—threatened
2. [Valley elderberry longhorn beetle](#) (*Desmocerus californica dimorphus*)—threatened
3. [Giant garter snake](#) (*Thamnophis gigas*)—threatened
4. [Western yellow-billed cuckoo](#) (*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*)—threatened
5. [Least Bell's vireo](#) (*Vireo belli pusillus*)—endangered
6. [Palmate-bracted bird's beak](#) (*Chloropyron palmatum*)—endangered

Non-listed Species

7. [Western pond turtle](#) (*Actinemys marmorata*)
8. [Swainson's hawk](#) (*Buteo swainsoni*)
9. [White-tailed kite](#) (*Elanus leucurus*)
10. [Western burrowing owl](#) (*Athene cunicularia hypugaea*)
11. [Bank swallow](#) (*Riparia riparia*)
12. [Tricolored blackbird](#) (*Agelaius tricolor*)

8. What are Yolo County, and the cities of Davis, West Sacramento, Winters, and Woodland going to do to offset the harm to all of these species?

The applicants developed the Draft Yolo Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan, as required under section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Endangered Species Act, to offset impacts to the covered species associated with implementing activities covered in the plan. All covered activities under the draft habitat conservation plan would incorporate avoidance and minimization measures to help reduce impacts to covered species. In addition, the draft habitat conservation plan would establish a county-wide reserve system (based on willing sellers), comprised of approximately 32,406 acres that would be protected, managed, and enhanced for the benefit of the covered species.

9. How will residents of Yolo County be affected?

The Yolo HCP will not affect most residents of Yolo County. The HCP does not authorize the urban or rural projects, or the public and private operations and maintenance activities described above.

Those projects would continue to be authorized under the discretion and authority of the local (city or county) land use jurisdictions. Where feasible, some of the land conserved through the HCP may be opened to the general public for certain recreational activities; however, privately held conserved land under conservation easement for the HCP would remain private, under the continued control of the landowner, and not open to the general public for recreation or other purposes.

10. What activities does the habitat conservation plan allow the applicant to conduct?

The Draft Plan covers the following five general categories of covered activities

1. Urban projects and activities
 - a. General urban development
 - b. Urban public services
 - c. Infrastructure
 - d. Utilities
 - e. Urban projects in rural areas
2. Rural projects and activities
 - a. General rural development
 - b. Rural public services
 - c. Infrastructure
 - d. Utilities
 - e. Agricultural economic development
 - f. Aggregate mining
 - g. Open space (e.g., management, restoration, and enhancement of existing natural and semi natural lands for rare species)
3. Public and private operations and maintenance activities (e.g., repair and replacement of: culverts; water/sewer; roadways; and power facilities; wastewater collection; treatment and disposal; and stormwater collection, treatment, and drainage, etc.)
4. Conservation strategy implementation throughout the reserve system
 - a. Habitat restoration
 - b. Management
 - c. Enhancement activities
5. Neighboring landowner agreements, ensuring that private landowners adjacent to the reserve system are not subject to any additional regulatory requirements in the event some covered species expand onto private properties as a result of HCP implementation.